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BENNETT SAYS PENTAGON DECISION ON TOOEELE "DOESN'T MAKE SENSE", ADVOCATES CROSS-SERVICE MERGING

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Senator Bob Bennett (R-Utah) today issued the following statement regarding the listing of a portion of Tooele Army Depot on the Administration's Base Closure and Realignment list:

"I believe the Pentagon recommendation to close the northern portion of Tooele Army Depot clearly is a bad idea. It makes no sense to invest \$110 million dollars in a state-of-the-art facility, cut the ribbon, dedicate the building, and then immediately close its doors.

"Obviously this recommendation, made entirely within the Army, does not recognize the need and the potential to cross service lines. For example, the Marine Corps currently is performing similar maintenance work at a Barstow Base with old, antiquated equipment. It makes much more sense to combine the work in the respective branches of the service and utilize a new facility and highly trained personnel.

"Downsizing is inevitable. Everyone expects to feel part of the nation's defense cuts. However, let's be wise in what we cut. This approach will not save taxpayer dollars. Instead, it will force other bases which must absorb new work, to invest in modernization. We are duplicating efforts and ignoring very viable alternatives.

"I will be working with my colleagues in the delegation and Governor Leavitt to try and convince the Base Closure Commission that this approach does not make sense."